

SAS-001

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10 Title of the Invention

Sandal Socks

Background of the Invention

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1. Field of the Invention

This invention relates to a removable covering for use with sandals.

2. Description of the Related Art

Sandals are extremely popular in warmer weather. When people wear sandals, they rarely also wear socks. Socks simply do not look good with sandals. In addition, socks
5 cannot comfortably be used with sandals such as “flip-flops” that have a thong that fits between a person’s toes.

One disadvantage of not using socks is that no material is present to abate accumulation of sweat. This sweat can irritate the feet of a person who is wearing the sandals.
10 The sweat also can lead to slippage, which can be a safety concern if the person is driving a car or other vehicle.

Furthermore, excessive sweat can soak into the sandals, speeding up the rate at which the sandals wear out. This sweat also can lead to an unpleasant odor.

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Summary of the Invention

Accordingly, what is needed is a product that functions along the lines of socks to help abate accumulation of sweat. These “sandal socks” should be usable with any type of
20 sandals, including sandals such as “flip-flops” that have a thong that fits between a person’s toes. Furthermore, the sandal socks should be easily removable and washable.

Accordingly, one aspect of the invention is an item called a "sandal sock." The sandal sock includes a first covering shaped to fit on a second covering, with the first covering attachable to the second covering in such a manner that the first covering is removable, and with the second covering attachable to the sandal in a manner more secure than the first covering is attachable to the second covering. When a person wears the sandal with the first covering and the second covering attached, at least a portion of the first covering is disposed between the sandal and the person's foot.

The term "sandal sock" can refer to just the first covering or to the first covering in combination with the second covering. In any event, the sandal sock provides a barrier between the sandal and a person's foot, helping to address the problems set forth above.

Preferably, the first covering is at least partially made of cotton, polyester, nylon, silk, or some combination thereof. Other materials can be used. The removable first covering preferably is washable, permitting extended use and re-use. In alternative embodiments, the first covering can be impregnated with a deodorant, medication, or both deodorant and medication. The first covering also can be padded. Other variations are possible without departing from the scope of the invention.

Preferably, the first covering and the second covering are attachable via one or more hook-and-loop type fasteners. Different advantages are afforded by having the loop part of

the fasteners on the first covering or the second covering. If the loop part is on the first covering, washability of the first covering might be improved. (The hook part of some hook-and-loop type fasteners do not weather washing well.) If the loop part is on the second covering, a sandal with only the second covering attached would be more comfortable. Such a situation could arise, for example, if the first covering was worn out and no replacement was available.

In one embodiment, the second covering includes an adhesive on one side whereby the second covering is attachable to the sandal. The adhesive can be permanent or semi-permanent. In this embodiment, a cover can be provided for the side of the second covering with the adhesive. This cover can be peeled off before attaching the second covering to the sandal.

Some sandals include a thong that fits between a person's toes. Accordingly, the sandal sock can include a slit for this thong, permitting use of the sandal sock with this type of sandal.

Sandal socks can be shaped to fit a generic shape of sandal. Alternatively, they can be specifically shaped to fit more closely a specific brand and design of sandal.

In another embodiment, a sandal is designed to accommodate sandal socks without further modification. For example, the top of the base of the sandal could include hooks or loops for hook-and-loop type fasteners. If the sandal is designed in this fashion, the second

covering discussed above would not be needed, although it could be present. In this embodiment, the sandal sock includes a covering shaped to fit on the sandal, with the covering attachable to the sandal in such a manner that the covering is removable. When a person wears the sandal with the covering attached, at least a portion of the covering is disposed between the sandal and the person's foot. The invention includes both the sandal sock and the sandal for this embodiment.

The invention also includes methods of making and using sandal socks.

This brief summary has been provided so that the nature of the invention may be understood quickly. A more complete understanding of the invention may be obtained by reference to the following description of the preferred embodiments thereof in connection with the attached drawings.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Figure 1 shows a sandal sock according to an aspect of the invention being attached to a sandal.

Figure 2 shows a sandal with an attached sandal sock according to an aspect of the invention.

Figure 3 shows a sandal sock according to an aspect of the invention being attached to a sandal with a thong that fits between a person's toes.

5 Figure 4 shows a sandal with an attached sandal sock according to an aspect of the invention.

Figure 5 shows a sandal designed to accommodate sandal socks according to an aspect of the invention without further modification.

10 Description of the Preferred Embodiment

Figure 1 shows a sandal sock according to an aspect of the invention being attached to a sandal.

15 Briefly, one embodiment of the sandal sock includes a first covering shaped to fit on a second covering, with the first covering attachable to the second covering in such a manner that the first covering is removable, and with the second covering attachable to the sandal in a manner more secure than the first covering is attachable to the second covering. When a person wears the sandal with the first covering and the second covering attached, at least a portion of the
20 first covering is disposed between the sandal and the person's foot. In this embodiment, the term

“sandal sock” can refer to just the first covering or to the first covering in combination with the second covering.

In Figure 1, first covering 1 is shaped to fit on second covering 2. First covering 1
5 preferably is at least partially made of cotton, polyester, nylon, silk, or some combination thereof. These materials are preferably used because they tend to be comfortable and absorptive. Other materials can be used for first covering 1.

First covering 1 is attachable to second covering 2 in such a manner that the first
10 covering is removable. The term “removable” means removable without causing significant damage beyond normal wear and tear. For example, hook-and-loop type (e.g., Velcro® brand) fasteners, buttons, snaps, and the like provide a removable attachment.

Thus, Figure 1 shows first covering 1 with loops 4 for hook-and-loop type
15 fasteners and second covering 2 with hooks 5 for the fasteners. The hooks and loops shown in the figure are not to scale. Preferably, standard-sized hooks and loops are used, although any size can be used.

In an alternative embodiment, the first covering has the hooks, and the second
20 covering has the loops. Different advantages are afforded by having the loop part of the fasteners on the first covering or the second covering. If the loop part is on the first covering, washability

of the first covering might be improved. (The hook part of some hook-and-loop type fasteners do not weather washing well.) If the loop part is on the second covering, a sandal with only the second covering attached would be more comfortable. Such a situation could arise, for example, if the first covering was worn out and no replacement was available.

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The hooks and loops in Figure 1 are arranged in several separate areas, namely around the periphery of the coverings and at a couple places within the peripheries of the coverings. Other arrangements are possible without departing from the scope of the invention and are within the scope of the invention.

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Second covering 2 is attachable to sandal 6. The term "sandal" broadly includes traditional sandals, as well as any other types of footwear with which socks are not traditionally worn, for example almost all women's footwear, men's and women's boat shoes, etc. These sandals can use any of various straps, thongs, ties, upper portions, or some combination thereof to secure their bases to a people's feet.

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Second covering 2 is attachable to sandal 6 in a manner more secure than first covering 1 is attachable to second covering 2. The attachment between the second covering and the sandal is more secure so that the second covering will not have a tendency to come off when the first covering is removed, for example to be washed or to be replaced.

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In a preferred embodiment, second covering 2 is attachable to sandal 6 using a permanent or semi-permanent adhesive. Such an adhesive is indicated in Figure 1 by reference numeral 7 pointing to the bottom side of second covering 2. In alternative embodiments, the second covering can be attached in other ways. These other ways include but are not limited to
5 stapling, stitching, or tacking.

Also in the preferred embodiment, the sandal sock includes protective cover 8 on the side of second covering 2 with the adhesive. This protective cover can be peeled off before attaching the second covering to the sandal.

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Thus, one preferred packaging of the sandal sock would include first covering 1, second covering 2, and protective cover 8, with first covering 1 second covering 2 held together by hook-and-loop type fasteners, and protective cover 8 attached to second covering 2 via adhesive.

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To use this embodiment of the sandal sock, a person would first peel off protective cover 8 from the side of the second covering with the adhesive. The person would then attach second covering 2 to the sandal using the adhesive. The result of such an operation is depicted in Figure 2, which shows sandal 9 with sandal sock 10 installed. Of course, these steps
20 can be performed in any order without departing from the invention; however, this order would be simplest to perform.

After a person wears sandal 9 with sandal sock 10 for a period of time, the person could remove the first covering from the sandal, for example to wash the covering. In the meantime, the person could replace the first covering with a replacement covering. These replacements coverings preferably will be sold in separate packages for use in this manner.

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Thus, the first coverings of the sandal socks (which also can be referred to themselves as sandal socks) can be used by people to provide a preferably washable and reusable barrier between their feet and their sandals. This barrier can help abate the effects of sweat, both improving comfort and possibly decreasing wear on the sandals.

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Specialized sandal socks can include first coverings such as first covering 1 that incorporate other beneficial properties. For example, the first covering could be impregnated with a deodorant, medication, or both deodorant and medication. The first covering (or second covering) also could be padded to improve comfort. Any other types of beneficial properties that can be incorporated into or provided by shoe inserts or socks can be incorporated in the sandal socks.

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The sandal socks (including replacement first coverings) can be shaped to fit generic shapes of sandal. Alternatively, the sandal socks can be shaped to fit a specific brand and design of sandal. Sizing for the sandal socks can be across a range of general sizes (e.g., small, medium, large, extra-large) or at a specific size (e.g., men's size 9, women's size 7, children's

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size 5, etc.). Sandal socks with generic shapes and general sizes are likely to be less expensive to manufacture, especially for smaller lots. The specifically shaped and sized sandal socks might provide a better fit on different sandals.

5 Alternatively, the sandal socks could include cut-lines, perforations, instructions, or some combination thereof to permit a person to customize the size and fit of the sandal socks, for example to meet a person's preferences or to fit a particular pair of sandals. Other techniques for setting or customizing the shape and size of the sandal socks can be used.

10 Figure 3 shows a sandal sock according to an aspect of the invention being attached to a sandal with a thong that fits between a person's toes.

In Figure 3, first covering 11 is shaped to fit on second covering 12 in such a manner that the first covering is removable. Thus, Figure 3 shows first covering 11 with hooks 14 for hook-and-loop type fasteners and second covering 12 with loops 15 for the fasteners. The hooks and loops shown in the figure are not to scale. Preferably, standard-sized hooks and loops are used, although any size can be used.

Figure 3 shows the opposite arrangement of hooks and loops as Figure 1. Figure 3 also illustrates a different layout of the fasteners, namely across the entire surfaces of the

coverings. Other arrangements are possible without departing from the scope of the invention and are within the scope of the invention.

Second covering 12 is attachable to sandal 16 in a manner more secure than the
5 first covering is attachable to the second covering. Reference numeral 17 indicates an adhesive that can be used to secure second covering 12 to sandal 16.

In Figure 3, sandal 16 includes a thong that fits between a person's toes. In order
to accommodate this thong, first covering 11 and second covering 12 include slit 18. This slit
10 permits the coverings to be attached to the sandal around the thong. Figure 4 shows sandal 19 of this type with attached sandal sock 20.

In another embodiment of the invention, a sandal designed to accommodate
sandal socks according to the invention without further modification. In this arrangement, a
15 second covering such as second coverings 2 and 12 is omitted. Instead, an attachment for a sandal sock (i.e., a covering such as first coverings 1 and 11) is directly designed and incorporated into the sandal.

One aspect of this embodiment of the invention is a sandal sock that includes a
20 covering shaped to fit on a sandal, with the covering attachable to the sandal in such a manner

that the covering is removable. When a person wears the sandal with the covering attached, at least a portion of the covering is disposed between the sandal and the person's foot.

Another aspect of this embodiment of the invention is a sandal designed to use
5 such a sandal sock. This sandal preferably includes at least a base, one or more straps, thongs, ties, or some combination thereof disposed to secure the base to a person's foot, and an attachment for a covering shaped to fit on a sandal, with the covering attachable to the sandal in such a manner that the covering is removable. When a person wears the sandal with the covering attached, at least a portion of the covering is disposed between the sandal and the person's foot.
10 Figure 5 depicts such a sandal.

In Figure 5, sandal 22 includes loops for hook-and-loop type fasteners that can be used to removably attach a sandal sock onto the sandal. In alternative embodiments, the sandal could include hooks for hook-and-loops type fasteners, possibly arranged in a different manner.
15 The sandal also could include other suitable types of fasteners, for example buttons or snaps.

In actuality, a sandal such as sandal 22 can be made by simply attaching a second covering such as covering 2 or 12 to a regular sandal such as sandal 6 or 16, thereby providing the sandal with fasteners for a covering such as first covering 1 or 11. Alternatively, a more
20 permanent technique can be used to incorporate such fasteners into a sandal. For example,

fasteners could be directly molded, stitched, formed, or otherwise incorporated into the sandal.

Other techniques are possible without departing from the scope of the invention.

Alternative Embodiments

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Any of the features described above and depicted in the figures can be used with any of the other features. Thus, for example, slit 18 in Figure 3 can be used with first covering 1 and second covering 2 in Figure 1. Likewise, any of the features of first coverings 1 and 11 shown in Figures 1 and 3 can be used with sandal 22 in Figure 5. Many other combinations are possible without departing from the scope of the invention. Furthermore, although preferred
10 embodiments of the invention are disclosed herein, many variations are possible without departing from the scope of the invention which remain within the content, scope and spirit of the invention, and these variations would become clear to those skilled in the art after perusal of this application.